

Claims

- [c1] A method in a computer for displaying advertisements while a user plays a computer game, the method comprising:
- receiving a collection of advertisements from a server computer via a communications link;
 - storing the received collection of advertisements;
 - starting execution of the computer game to be played by the user, the computer game to be executed by the computer;
 - while the user is playing the computer game,
 - selecting an advertisement from the stored collection of advertisements; and
 - displaying the selected advertisement so that the user can view the selected advertisement while playing the computer game.
- [c2] The method of claim 1 including tracking when the displayed advertisement is selected by the user.
- [c3] The method of claim 2 including sending to a server computer an indication that the advertisement was selected by the user.
- [c4] The method of claim 1 including selecting another advertisement from the stored collection and displaying the selected other advertisement while the user is playing the computer game.
- [c5] The method of claim 1 including rewarding the user based on time spent playing the game.
- [c6] The method of claim 1 including rewarding the user based on speed at which the user completes the game.
- [c7] The method of claim 1 including rewarding the user based on performance of the user at playing the game relative to performance of other users at playing the game.

[c8] A method in a computer for outputting advertisements while a user interacts with a computer program executing at the computer, the method comprising:

- providing a collection of advertisements at the computer;
- starting execution of the computer program on the computer; and
- during execution of the computer program on the computer,
 - selecting an advertisement from the provided collection of advertisements; and
 - outputting the selected advertisement so that the user perceives the selected advertisement while interacting with the computer program.

[c9] The method of claim 8 including providing additional advertisements to the computer.

[c10] The method of claim 8 including:

- during execution of the computer program on the computer,
 - selecting another advertisement from the provided collection of advertisements; and
 - outputting the selected other advertisement.

[c11] The method of claim 10 including storing indications of the output advertisements.

[c12] The method of claim 11 including sending to a server computer the stored indications.

[c13] The method of claim 8 including:

- receiving from the user a selection of an output advertisement; and
- storing an indication that the user selected the output advertisement.

[c14] The method of claim 13 including sending to a server computer the stored indication.

[c15] The method of claim 8 wherein the selection of the advertisement is based

on a characteristic of the user.

- [c16] The method of claim 8 wherein the provided collection is based on a characteristic of the user.
- [c17] The method of claim 8 wherein the computer program is a game and including collecting statistics relating to the game.
- [c18] The method of claim 17 including sending the collected statistics to a server computer.
- [c19] The method of claim 8 wherein the computer program does not interact with another computer during its execution.
- [c20] The method of claim 8 wherein the execution of the computer program and the selecting of the advertisement are independent of a server computer.
- [c21] The method of claim 8 wherein the collection of advertisements is provided by a server computer.
- [c22] The method of claim 8 wherein the selecting and outputting are under control of the executing computer program.
- [c23] The method of claim 8 wherein the selecting and outputting are under control of another executing computer program.
- [c24] The method of claim 8 wherein the outputting includes displaying the selected advertisement.
- [c25] A method in a server computer for collecting information, the method comprising receiving indications relating to advertisements output while a user interacts with a computer program executing at a client computer, the indications being stored at the client computer while the client computer is offline from a network for connecting the client computer to the server computer.
- [c26] The method of claim 25 wherein the indications indicate that the user

selected an advertisement.

- [c27] The method of claim 25 wherein the advertisements that are output are selected based on a characteristic of the user.
- [c28] The method of claim 25 wherein the advertisements are provided to the client computer by another computer.
- [c29] The method of claim 28 wherein the other computer is the server computer.
- [c30] The method of claim 25 wherein the computer program is a game and including receiving indications relating to playing the game.
- [c31] The method of claim 25 wherein the computer program does not interact with another computer during its execution.
- [c32] The method of claim 25 wherein the client computer selects an advertisement independent of the server computer.
- [c33] A computer-readable medium containing a data structure that includes indications relating to advertisements output while a user interacts with a computer program executing at a client computer, the indications being stored at the client computer while the client computer is not connected to the server computer.
- [c34] The computer-readable medium of claim 33 wherein the indications indicate that the user selected an advertisement.
- [c35] The computer-readable medium of claim 33 wherein the advertisements that are output are selected based on a characteristic of the user.
- [c36] The computer-readable medium of claim 33 wherein the advertisements are provided to the client computer by another computer.
- [c37] The computer-readable medium of claim 36 wherein the other computer is the server computer that receives the data structure.
- [c38] The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein the computer program

is a game and the data structure includes indications relating to playing the game.

[c39] The computer-readable medium of claim 33 wherein the computer program does not interact with another computer during its execution.

[c40] The computer-readable medium of claim 33 wherein the client computer selects an advertisement independent of a server computer.

[c41] A computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a computer to output advertisements while a user interacts with a computer program executing at the computer, by a method comprising:

- providing a collection of advertisements at the computer;
- starting execution of the computer program on the computer;
- selecting an advertisement from the provided collection of advertisements; and
- outputting the selected advertisement so that the user can perceive the selected advertisement while interacting with the computer program.

[c42] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 including providing additional advertisements to the computer.

[c43] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 including:

- selecting another advertisement from the provided collection of advertisements; and
- outputting the selected other advertisement.

[c44] The computer-readable medium of claim 43 including storing indications of the output advertisements.

[c45] The computer-readable medium of claim 44 including sending to a server computer the stored indications.

[c46] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 including:

- receiving from a user selection of an output advertisement; and

storing an indication that the user selected the output advertisement.

- [c47] The computer-readable medium of claim 46 including sending to a server computer the stored indication.
- [c48] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the selection of the advertisement is based on a characteristic of the user.
- [c49] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the provided collection is based on a characteristic of the user.
- [c50] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the computer program is a game and including collecting statistics relating to the game.
- [c51] The computer-readable medium of claim 50 including sending the collected statistics to a server computer.
- [c52] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the computer program does not interact with another computer during its execution.
- [c53] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the execution of the computer program and the selecting of the advertisement are independent of a server computer.
- [c54] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the collection of advertisements is provided by a server computer.
- [c55] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the selecting and outputting are under control of the executing computer program.
- [c56] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the selecting and outputting are under control of another executing computer program.
- [c57] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the outputting includes displaying the selected advertisement.
- [c58] The computer-readable medium of claim 41 wherein the selecting and outputting are performed during execution of the computer program.

[c59] A system for outputting advertisements at a computer while a user interacts with a computer program executing at the computer, comprising:

means for storing a collection of advertisements at the computer;

means for executing the computer program;

means for selecting an advertisement from the collection of advertisements; and

means outputting the selected advertisement so that the user can perceive the selected advertisement while interacting with the computer program.

[c60] The system of claim 59 including means for providing additional advertisements to the computer.

[c61] The system of claim 59 including:

means for selecting another advertisement from the provided collection of advertisements; and

means for outputting the selected other advertisement.

[c62] The system of claim 59 means for sending indications of selected advertisements to a server computer.